

Unwise Action.

A Board of Estimate is a piece of new political machinery that came into use here with the adoption of the town act. It is made up of members of the Town Council and members of the Board of Education, and its function is to fix the amount of money that shall be placed in the tax levy of any year for public school purposes. In some respects it is a useful piece of machinery, but recent events have shown that it can be manipulated to serve purposes and work evil in a manner that is likely to be a source of serious trouble some day. For instance, in the spring of the current fiscal year the Board of Estimate of the present Town Council met and fixed the amount to be appropriated for school purposes for the current year at \$35,500. The Council for which the Board of Estimate acted was responsible for the administration of public affairs for the current year, and it approved of the sum named by the Board of Estimate. In the concluding part of this same fiscal year this same Board of Estimate met and named the sum that shall go into the tax levy for the next fiscal year, and for which year's administration another Council will be held responsible by the people.

The present Council has permitted the Board of Estimate to be used in the establishment of an unwise precedent. The Board of the current year said last spring what ought to be expended for schools under the administration of this year, and now it meets and says what the Council of next year shall spend for schools, and by looking into next year's work the present Council practically attempts to tie the hands of its successor in office. This strange spectacle of the Board of Estimate of one year attempting to control the appropriations for two years will cause taxpayers to wonder what kind of a marvellous and dangerous piece of governmental machinery the Board of Estimate is.

The Town Council of the fiscal year 1903-1904 will represent the sentiments of the people with respect to public matters that will be live issues in the campaign that will forerun the election of members of the Council. According to rules of common courtesy it is a gross piece of impertinence for the present Council to countenance or take any action interfering with the freedom of action of their successors in matters pertaining to the tax rate.

It is well known that the people of this town are intensely bent on securing a lower tax rate, and ready to sacrifice some of the luxurious features of government for the purpose of attaining that end. The present Council did well in its efforts towards reducing the tax rate below that of the previous year, but the rate is still high and will be an issue in the spring, and Councilmen will be elected on the strength of that issue.

The present Council evidently does not intend that its successors shall be in a position to make a record for lower taxes, and takes action in advance that will thwart any such possibility.

The Board of Estimate of the present Council is responsible for one of the strangest moves ever made in the administration of local affairs, and it is obvious that the precedent that is likely to be established is fraught with danger. If political party divisions figured prominently in local affairs the danger of this precedent would be conspicuous at once, and shrewd politicians would probably interfere to prevent the Council being used for the purpose of serving the present interest of one department of government. The Fire Department with its pressing needs and the Police Department have the same equitable right to demand double and advance service of the Board of Estimate as the Board of Education has. An attempt is being made to minimize the effect of the action taken by the Board of Estimate Tuesday night, when it fixed the school appropriation for next year and increased it \$4,000 over this year by showing the action was not legal, and the Council of next year, if it desires to do so, can repeal it. There is very little likelihood of any such upset, and the precedent of one Council infringing upon the prerogatives of another will go on record and be a fruitful cause of future mischief.

The Town Council faltered in its duty

when it did not flatly reject the Board of Education's proposition for premature action on the part of the Board of Estimate when the Board of Education first suggested such action. The illogicality of such action was freely commented upon and admitted, and there was good and sound cause for refusing to comply with the request.

It is bad policy for a retiring Council to saddle office-holders and appropriations on to its successors by making advance appointments and advance recommendations, and in complying with the request of the Board of Education for premature action in regard to the school appropriations for another year the present Town Council permitted itself to be placed in an untenable position.

Trolley Company in Default.

Town Councilman Herbert C. Farrand was a passenger on a North Jersey Street Railway car from Caldwell one day last week. After perusing the entertaining advertising panels in the car ceiling Councilman Farrand directed his attention to some framed official documents in the car, and learned to his astonishment that the car license was fourteen months old, and was not signed by the Chairman of the Council, George Peterson. This was a case of gross negligence on the part of the railroad company and Mr. Farrand reported it to the Town Council Monday night and the Clerk was directed to notify the company that the car license must be renewed. This is simply one instance in many, Mr. Farrand said, in which the trolley company deliberately ignore the terms of the franchise, and Mr. Farrand suggested that the joint committee that is going to some day "jolt" the street railway company make this neglect to pay the car license a count in the indictment against the company. Mr. Farrand severely arraigned the street railway company for the disposition shown by it to evade its just obligations.

The Garbage Act.

A bill introduced by Assemblyman Boyd, and which passed both houses of the Legislature and now awaits the Governor's signature, enables the Town Council to appropriate money for the collection of garbage. The bill is as follows:

Supplement to an act entitled "An Act Providing for the Formation, Establishment and Government of Towns," approved March 7, 1895.

Be it enacted by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey,

That in addition to the powers now possessed by the Town Council under the provisions of the act to which this is a supplement, the Council shall have power by ordinance to provide for the collection, removal, treatment and disposal of ashes and garbage, and to appropriate and provide for raising money by taxation for the said purpose, or any or either of them.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Improvements at Greenwood Lake.

The Erie Railroad Company announces extensive improvements at Greenwood Lake, the attractive and popular resort located on the line of that road, forty-five miles from New York in the heart of the Warwick Mountains. The Casino at the Glens is being thoroughly overhauled, and the kitchen and dining hall will be enlarged in order to provide ample accommodations for large parties during the coming summer. Many new and attractive features are being added to the equipment of the place, and improvement and expansion are the order of the day.

Much the same thing is also going on at Warwick Woodlands and the manager of this fine property is not to be outdone in his efforts to make the place one of the most attractive and satisfactory resorts for parties of any number within a day's journey of the metropolitan district.

The Greenwood Lake Division of the Erie is undergoing extensive improvements, including the completion of the double track, the addition of more powerful locomotives, etc. This will ensure prompt movement of trains and fast time. The season of 1903 will be an unusually brilliant one at beautiful Greenwood Lake.

Ordinance Adopted.

An ordinance was adopted Monday night by the Town Council for the opening, widening, and extending of Cedar Street and Weaver Avenue passed final reading, and is published in this issue of the CITIZEN.

Hugh D. King, who is personally interested in this improvement and who has closely watched the progress of the matter through the Council, was present Monday night and replied to some questions from Mr. Moore about Cedar Street.

No Action Taken.

No action was taken by the Town Council Monday night in the matter of the Lackawanna track elevation and improvement matter, as the company had not submitted a complete plan of track elevation in this town. Watsessing people are watching that matter with keen interest, as it is of vital importance to many property-owners there.

BOARD OF TRADE

HELD ITS QUARTERLY MEETING THURSDAY NIGHT.

Public Matters Discussed—Reports of Sub-Committees Received—Officers Elected—Banquet Talked About—Treasurer's Financial Statement Received and Dues Paid In.

The quarterly meeting of the Board of Trade was held Thursday night. Between thirty-five and forty members were present and several animated discussions of local matters interested those in attendance.

Secretary Peter J. Quinn read a number of communications sent to the Board and relating to various matters. Dr. R. W. Cornelison reported for the Executive Committee. William Biggart of the Membership Committee reported six applications for membership, an increase of two over the previous report of that committee.

In the absence of Theodore F. Ward, Alfred H. Edgerley reported for the committee on railroad interests. He read the correspondence that had passed between Mr. Ward and President Trustee of the Lackawanna Railroad Company and the Town Council. Mr. Edgerley supplemented his report with a strong plea to the Board of Trade to use its influence in preventing the Lackawanna Railroad Company from carrying out its contemplated plan of moving the location of the Watsessing station. The Board adopted resolutions offered by Mr. Garabrant and Mr. Suphus that were calculated to protect the Watsessing interests.

Dr. R. W. Cornelison reported the result of a conference with the United States postal officials over local postal matters. The outcome of the conference was a decision the First Assistant Postmaster General had, to the effect that Bloomfield now had a sufficient number of outgoing mails and the service could not at present be increased. The Executive Committee, Dr. Cornelison said, deemed it proper to reply to the postal authorities setting forth that the request was not for a greater number of outgoing mails but for a wider distribution of the time now covered by the mail service.

David G. Garabrant made an interesting report for the Committee on Legislation. Mr. Garabrant spoke of the courtesy of Assemblyman Boyd in offering to keep the Board of Trade in touch with all legislative affecting towns. In speaking of the Lord annexation bill Mr. Garabrant said he had thanked Mr. Boyd for the amendments he had made to the bill. The Passaic River Valley sewer bill and the Morris Canal abandonment bill were two measures for the Legislature of local interest. Mr. Garabrant said, and with respect to the latter he had talked with Mr. Boyd and the latter was of the opinion that the canal bill would pass.

The Board of Trade banquet was a theme of discussion, but beyond deciding to hold a banquet nothing definite with regard to details was settled upon.

The election of officers for the ensuing year resulted as follows: President, William P. Suphus; Vice President, James H. Moore; Secretary, Peter J. Quinn; Treasurer, Charles R. Underwood.

M. N. Higgins, speaking as a taxpayer tried to provoke a discussion of the public school question, but Mr. McGowan quietly side-tracked the question by declaring it a matter outside of the province of the Board. Samuel Elor of the Board of Education favored the proposition made by Mr. Higgins to the effect that the Board of Trade or any other organization investigate the cost of running the schools. Mr. Elor said there was nothing secret in the School Board's business methods, and any one desiring information could obtain it down to the minutest detail.

Berkeley Neighborhood Club.

On Thursday, March 19, at 8 P.M., an entertainment will be held in the assembly room of the Berkeley School, under the auspices of the Berkeley School Neighborhood Club. The proceeds are to be devoted to the picture fund of the Berkeley School. The music will be furnished by the Euterpean Orchestra, and there will be recitations by a celebrated humorist. The Boys' Chorus of the Berkeley School will sing. Admission for adults, 25 cents; for children, 15 cents.

The Glen Ridge Election.

Sixty-two votes were cast in Glen Ridge Tuesday at the election for borough officers. There was only one ticket in the field. The candidates chosen were as follows: Mayor for two years, A. R. Brewer; Councilmen for one year, D. H. Standish, and A. J. Lockwood; three years, G. C. White, and F. A. Scheffler; Commissioner of Appeals for three years, John Sherman.

East Orange Water Contract.

A resolution presented by Chairman Gedney of the Water Committee was unanimously adopted at a meeting of the East Orange City Council Monday night, directing Mayor Bruce and City Clerk Long to sign a contract with the officials of the city of Newark for a water supply. The contract will be sent to the Board of Street and Water Commissioners for their approval and signatures, binding Newark.

The contract bears date of January 1, 1903, and provides that the minimum daily quantity of Pequannock water to be furnished is half a million gallons, with a maximum of 1,000,000 gallons (and in case of necessity more). The cost is to be \$80 per million gallons, payable quarterly the twentieth day of April, July, October and January. The water is to be delivered with a pressure of sixty pounds at Orange and Fourteenth Streets, and at Springdale Avenue if desired, and as furnished by the Orange Water Company.

Any meter fees are to be made at the joint expense of the two cities, and provision is made to arbitrate disputes as to the quantities of water furnished. Pending settlement undisputed quantities of water are to be paid for. East Orange will pay all costs for connection. It is provided, however, that should East Orange before the year's contract expires decide to continue the arrangement for an additional nine years, and take a minimum daily supply of 1,000,000 gallons beginning January 1, 1904, and the entire supply after January 1, 1905, the cost will be \$50 a million gallons, and Newark will give credit to East Orange equal to the difference between that figure and the amount paid during the present year, provided the amount shall not be less than \$50 per day.

The meters shall be under control of Newark, and East Orange will have the right to be represented when any tests are to be made.

Force the Revenue.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CITIZEN:

SIR: If the Board of Education must have four thousand dollars more than this past year for the administration of the public schools next year, and if the people as the advocates of more money for schools claim will not listen to any curtailment in the general system of school education now in vogue here, then the members of the Town Council who have it in their power to adjust appropriations for public purposes must

resort to some method of indirect taxation for increasing the public revenue. It would prove an unpopular policy for the Council to try to raise more money than is now raised by direct taxation, and thereby force the tax rate above three per cent. To meet the increased needs of the public schools, the town revenue must be forced up, but at the same time hundreds of taxpayers are demanding that the tax rate be forced down even below 2.90.

If there is a likely increase of tax rates in the town of any considerable amount, the demand of the School Board for more money might possibly be met without serious inconvenience to property-owners, but the recent action of the State Board of Taxation in the matter of appeals from this town indicates very clearly that there can be no increase in the valuation of properties made in Bloomfield.

In view of all the facts that bear upon the issue at hand, it is evident that the Town Council must resort to measures of indirect taxation, and an increase in town revenue must be wrung from the liquor traffic.

There was a time when the town people supported thirty-five or more inns, taverns, and saloons. In accordance with an alleged majority sentiment in favor of fewer saloons, the number of places where intoxicants are publicly sold was reduced in a corresponding degree. That lost revenue could be regained by increasing the number of saloons, and to do so appears to offer the easiest solution of the problem now before the Town Council.

Several people stand ready to pay the three hundred dollar license fee next July for the privilege of opening saloons. Why not take the money that these people will give and turn it into the school fund? Why increase the burden of taxation upon hundreds of small property-owners simply for the sake of maintaining a system of public school education that goes far beyond the needs of eight-tenths of the people who send their children to the schools?

Some people claim that the saloons graduate all the losers in the town; perhaps the statement is an exaggeration, but whether it is or not the cost to the town of the preparatory college course given to a small percentage of the mass of public school children might as well be paid for by the saloons.

It is just as impossible for many of the property-owners in this town to pay more direct taxes as it is for the Board of Education to conduct the public schools with the same amount of money as was voted to the Board last year. The Town Council is between two impossibilities, and an increased number of saloons affords a way out of the difficulty. TAXPAYER

LOCAL POLITICS.

The Scrabble for the Office of Tax Collector—First Ward Councilman Fight.—The Public Schools in Politics—Prospective Contest for Assessor of Taxes—The Citizens' Ticket.

Two weeks from to-night the Republican party will hold its convention and make up the party ticket to be voted at the local election on Tuesday, April 14. The spring campaign in so far as the discussion of issues and candidates is concerned is now on. With respect to candidates, the central feature of the campaign is the position of Collector of Taxes. Rumors of a change in the office of Collector were current some time ago. That report has led to a genuine scrabble for the Republican party nomination for that position.

The present incumbent of the office, J. Howard Hardcastle, is not one of those who think a change in that office is necessary, and he is going to make a lively fight to retain his place. Among the first in the field to positively announce himself as a candidate for Collector and to seek the support of his friends in his candidacy was Walter M. Hooper. It was rumored during the week that Mr. Hooper had been requested to withdraw.

Some time ago when Frank Foster, at the particular request of the Republican party leaders, stood as the party candidate for Town Councilman in a hopeless contest in the Third Ward, it was said to have been agreed between Mr. Foster's friends and the party leaders that Mr. Foster's action would not be forgotten when a favorable opportunity arrived. Mr. Foster's friends think the time is at hand, and they have brought him forward as the Third Ward candidate for the Republican nomination for Collector of Taxes.

The Third Ward will have twenty-six delegates in the town convention. If both districts of the ward stand solid for a Third Ward man, Mr. Foster will go into the convention as the leading candidate, in so far as the number of pledged delegates is concerned.

In Mr. Hardcastle's own ward, the First, Joseph Fairbank is his chief opponent, and there is likely to be a lively fight at the First Ward primaries for delegates to the convention.

The contest going on in the Republican ranks over the Collectorship is not without interest to the Citizens' ticket party and the leaders of that party are conferring as to a candidate for Collector on their party ticket.

The premature action of the Board of Estimate with respect to the appropriation for school purposes has thrust the public schools into the political arena this spring in a manner that would not have occurred had the matter of the appropriation for schools been left to the proper time for considering appropriations.

In the First Ward, in addition to the contest over the Collectorship, there is likely to be a Councilmanic fight between the First and Second Districts. The First District will have the majority in the ward convention, and is likely to want to name a candidate other than the Second District delegates will want placed on the ticket.

In the Third Ward the Republican nomination for Councilman is going begging. The office is seeking a man. But the situation in the Third Ward may radically change before the day of the primaries. George Corraz and Daniel J. Brady are in consultation in regard to the make-up of the Third Ward Citizens' ticket.

MUST FILL UP LOWLANDS.

Bloomfield Board of Health Takes Measures to Protect the Public Health.

The Board of Health of Bloomfield last night organized for the year and elected these officers: President, Dr. Edwin M. Ward; secretary and registrar of vital statistics, William L. Johnson; attorney, Charles H. Halpin; Inspector Gilbert. The Inspector was instructed to notify George Rouboud, owner of the property north of Washington street, to fill up the swamp at that point within thirty days, or the board would do the work at Mr. Rouboud's expense. The swamp had been declared a nuisance by every physician in the town, and it was through their appeal that Inspector Gilbert urged the action that was taken.

T. Howell Johnson and Allen Andrews were appointed a committee to act with the Inspector in having a number of lowlands drained. Mr. Gilber recommended the appointment of a committee to act with a like committee of the Town Council to consider the garbage question. President Ward appointed John F. Capen and Allen Andrews to represent the board. William Hillman Dodd, for a number of years a member of the body, resigned for business reasons. His successor will be chosen by the council at its next meeting.

